

Tricks of the trade

Pulo do gato

Laura Silveira-Moriyama¹, Andrew J. Lees²

¹ Reta Lila Weston Institute of Neurological Studies, UCL Institute of Neurology, London, UK; Child Neurology Unit, Department of Neurology, University of Campinas (UNICAMP), Campinas, Brazil;

² Child Neurology Unit, Department of Neurology, University of Campinas (UNICAMP), Campinas SP, Brazil.

Correspondence:

Laura Silveira-Moriyama
Reta Lila Weston Institute of Neurological Studies, UCL Institute of Neurology
1 Wakefield street, WC1N 1PJ,
London - UK
E-mail: laura.moriyama@ucl.ac.uk

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The Editorial Board of *Arquivos de Neuro-Psiquiatria* is pleased to announce the opening of a new section, which is entitled “Tricks of the trade/*Pulo do gato*”. It provides articles from invited authorities in various fields of Neurology who are willing to share their expertise, especially international experts who are keen on collaborations with Latin-American Neuroscience and Clinical Neurology. To open the section we invited Doctor Sarosh Irani and Professor Angela Vincent from Oxford to write a practical update on the exciting field of autoimmune encephalitis.

Professor Angela Vincent has major contributions to the understanding and the diagnosis of various antibody-mediated diseases of the central and peripheral nervous system. She did extensive work on myasthenia gravis, including the discovery of MuSK¹ antibodies and the development of methods to detect the presence of low-affinity IgG anti-acetylcholine receptor antibodies². She also described the association of VGKC-complex antibodies with Morvan's fibrillary chorea^{3,4}, and she later defined the clinical manifestations in cases of limbic encephalitis associated with the same antibodies⁵, and subsequently the actual targets of the antibodies in the brain⁶. Amongst other things, Vincent also described a novel glycine receptor antibody in patients with progressive encephalomyelitis with rigidity and myoclonus⁷.

In the first “Tricks of the trade”, the invited ones explain the main advances on the understanding of the pathophysiology of the autoimmune encephalitis and pinpoint the major clinical features that differentiate the encephalitis associated with each known antibody. Autoimmune encephalitis accounts for a significant proportion of the cases suspected to have viral encephalitis, which are negative for the main viral aetiologies, including the classical cases of limbic encephalitis. Most importantly, when readily identified they respond successfully to immunotherapies. Therefore, it is of interest to the general neurologist as much as it is to the specialist to understand the developments in this rapidly changing field.

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